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The Churches Speak

QUITE exceptional anticipation surrounded the recent National Study Conference on "The Churches and a Just and Durable Peace," and now awaits the publication of its findings. Could the representatives of American Protestantism, until three months ago ranged in bitterly embattled camps, unite on any significant proposals for post-war reordering?

The Conference was notable in its personnel. Its membership has been described as "the most distinguished in a quarter-century of American church assemblies." Despite the difficulties which mid-week dates presented for lay attendance, a considerable number of foremost Christian laymen were present. If their views counted for less than their expert competence warranted, it was partly due to their numerical inferiority, partly to the fact that the layman has not yet learned to make his voice heard above the inveterate volubility of the clergy.

In areas bristling with controversy, wide differences of Christian judgment were to be expected. But apart from a single incident (described in the next following editorial), the nearly four hundred delegates pressed steadily forward to a remarkably broad consensus on most vital matters. Proponents of platitudes and panaceas were, as always, present and vocal; but they won little response from a body which was clearly intent upon hewing to the main line. It was the considered opinion among those most familiar with such meetings that the Delaware assembly advanced farther and to more significant conclusions than any of them had dared to hope.

Already the message of the conference is being likened to the Malvern Report or the more recent declaration on "Social Justice and Economic Reconstruction" of the British churches. Neither analogy is apt. The Malvern statement came almost wholly from a single pen, that of the new Archbishop of Canterbury. The document on "Social Justice and Economic Reconstruction" is the product of months of careful drafting by a small group of the ablest

minds among the British churches. In contrast the Delaware Report was thrown together by four commissions of roughly one hundred members each in four two-hour sessions, with editing committees working feverishly at odd moments and late hours. Inevitably, the marks of scissors and paste are upon it; no special training in textual criticism is required to detect the splicings. Likewise inevitably its different parts are of varying weight and worth. Indeed there is some danger that the most important declarations will be lost amidst a mass of useful but secondary material.

Happily, the section with most immediate and vital relevance (The Political Bases of a Just and Durable Peace), drafted under the chairmanship of President Dodds of Princeton, is at once the briefest and the ablest of the four parts. Readers of the message will do well to give it major attention. It lays down six principles:—

1. Full and responsible participation by the United States.
2. The importance of "emergency measures" in the interval between Armistice and Peace.
3. Definition of the essential functions of government, and of the division of those functions between national and international authorities.
4. Specification of the powers now exercised by national governments which must henceforth be delegated to international government.
5. Recognition that international authorities may be of two kinds—those charged with specific duties such as the International Labor Organization, and a comprehensive world government of delegated powers.
6. Administration of colonial territories under international authority.

The heart of its recommendations is embodied in this sentence: "The ultimate requirement is a duly constituted world government of delegated powers: an international legislative body, an international

court with adequate jurisdiction, international administrative bodies with necessary powers, and adequate international police forces and provision for world-wide economic sanctions." Within its jurisdiction must be lodged "the power of final judgment in controversies between nations, the maintenance and use of armed forces except for preservation of domestic order, and the regulation of international trade and population movements among nations." While the need for a variety of interim bodies with specific responsibilities is recognized, "such bodies must be adapted to the service of world order and government, and must not become a substitute therefor."

One self-imposed limitation seriously impaired the realism and effectiveness of the Delaware deliberations. The meeting had been called and planned before December 7th. In that setting, it was recognized that any discussion of America's relation to the conflict would precipitate endless controversy and might vitiate constructive accomplishment. Therefore it was agreed that all consideration of the War itself should be eliminated. This regulation, adopted before America's involvement, was reaffirmed and enforced. Any reference whatsoever to the bearing of the War's outcome, or even of measures taken during it, upon the making of peace was ruled out of order. Thus the conference was compelled to fly in the face of the most fundamental axiom, universally accepted by all competent students of the problem—namely, that the war and the peace to follow are organically related to each other, and that the character of the peace is being determined even now by the nature of the measures being taken for its prosecution. In this fashion, the mists of illusion in which great numbers of American churchmen have delighted while civilization was being destroyed continued to overshadow the Delaware Conference and condemn its conclusions to a measure of unreality and inadequacy.

H. P. V. D.

Is The Church at War?

A SINGLE incident somewhat marred the otherwise orderly and amicable progress of the Delaware Conference in its difficult achievement of significant agreements. It was the dogged insistence by one delegate that a declaration of his own phrasing should be written into the Conference findings. That declaration was: "The Christian church is not at war." After prolonged debate in one of the sections, he finally succeeded by a very narrow margin in having his sentence, slightly modified, included in the sectional report. Since its inclusion would

have violated the self-denying ordinance under which the Conference had agreed to proceed, that there should be no controversial references to the war, the statement was eliminated by the Steering Committee. Efforts to reintroduce it from the floor in plenary session were ruled out of order, and there was no appeal from this ruling.

This was the appropriate and, indeed, inevitable disposition of the matter, but it was unfortunate that the issue had to be settled on a technical point of order. It was even more unfortunate that most of the objections voiced in discussion were on grounds of expediency—that the publication of such a declaration would have conveyed a very false impression of the mind of the Conference, which was obviously true. It would have furthered clear thinking throughout the church if the proposal had been squarely faced on its own merits and rejected. The charge against it is at least threefold. The statement "The Christian church is not at war" is ambiguous. It is either untrue or meaningless.

Any negative declaration implies an affirmative of which it is the refutation. To say "The Christian church is not at war" implies that there are those who are proclaiming that "The Christian church is at war." We know of no one guilty of such an absurd affirmation. To imply that there are such persons is to set the whole discussion in false perspective. Such a slogan, in headlines throughout the secular and religious press as would certainly have happened, would have conveyed to the general public an utterly false impression both of the facts and of the attitudes of American Christians.

Secondly, the statement "The Christian church is not at war" is meaningless when not misleading. If it intends to say that "The Christian church has not declared war" or "The Christian church is not waging war," it is a truism; it has been many centuries since the Christian churches engaged in military operations. Therefore, again, its affirmation could only confuse and mislead men's thought. If it means that the Christian church is not involved in the conflict, it is untrue. However one may define the church, the church has no existence apart from its members. Where they are involved in great corporate conflict, so is the church. Even the "Communion of Saints" cannot escape involvement in all the trials and struggles of its earthly members. Moreover, the church as companies of Christians dwelling within national communities which are at war is only too obviously involved in the conflict. The great truth which this perverse ambiguity so gravely obscures is clearly set forth in the Delaware declaration: "The church is a spiritual entity, one and indivisible, which as such

is not and cannot be broken by human conflicts."

The third and deeper fallacy in the statement lies in its implication that the church acknowledges no responsibility to the nations which are at war. That position has been consistently maintained only by the more extreme perfectionist Christian sects. They have accepted the inevitable corollary. That logical corollary is that a church which disclaims all obligation to the nation must surrender all privileges from the nation and disavow the right to speak to the nation. Had the Delaware Conference been misled into adoption of such a declaration, it would have disqualified itself in the eyes of fair-minded citizens for the task for which it had assembled.

The resolution was informed by a fundamentally unhistorical and irresponsible conception of the mutual relations of church and nation. It claims for the church unfettered prerogatives of criticism and

judgment upon the actions of the state, which is the political instrument of the nation; while the church disavows its obligations of service to the nation. Such a position is repellent to Christian conscience and violates ordinary canons of mutual obligation. Moreover, it proceeds from a false understanding of the relations of church and nation in the American tradition. It claims for the church both the independence espoused by Roger Williams and the status assured to religious institutions by the founding fathers upon presuppositions quite other than those of Williams. Such a claim is not sustained by considerations of justice, and has never been maintained by responsible Christians. The time is overdue for a reexamination of the relations of church and state in America, for a review of their historic relationship, and for a redefinition of an honorable and sound relationship between them.

H. P. V. D.

The Prospects of Christianity in Russia

GEORGE P. FEDOTOV

MORE than ever before Russia is shrouded in fog. War and severe censorship have cut her off from the external world. Are there serious shifts going on in the relations between Church and State? Immediately after the German invasion the medieval churches in the Kremlin, closed since 1917, were opened and on the squares of the Kremlin an immense crowd was gathered to pray, with the Metropolitan Sergius of Moscow, for the victory of the Russian army. We read also about the closing of the official organ of the atheist movement, "The Godless." It is perfectly natural. In the days of a terrible national ordeal it would be foolish to continue the religious struggle against the still large and loyal groups of the population. And yet we do not hear of the general amnesty for religious prisoners. In this case the negative proof is significant. Metropolitan Sergius, who is a strong supporter of the Moscow government, and who already has published an exhortation for national defense, would certainly have mentioned the religious amnesty had it really taken place. Perhaps one fact illustrates best of all the inward situation in Russia. It is well known that 100,000 Poles are now fighting in the ranks of the Red Army. These 100,000 Poles had to be sought and found with great pains in camps and prisons, as well as in deportation places of North Russia and Siberia. The total number of Poles imprisoned and deported after the Russian occupation of Western Poland is, according to Polish sources, a million persons. These one million Poles, so far as can be

discovered, were released. But Russians in camps and deportation places were not released. According to the same source of information, the number of Russians (this means, of course, of all nationalities in USSR) imprisoned or deported would amount to the huge figure of sixteen million.¹ Most of them are victims of the economic system; very few belong to the political opposition; but in their number are included also priests, monks, and religious "activists" (men and women), who are mentioned in all descriptions of present Soviet life.

Recent Church Situation in Russia

If we do not know exactly what is going on within the present-day Russia, we know quite well the recent past. The plight of religion in all its confessional forms was that of dry persecution. I say "dry" because bloody executions for religious activity were rare in recent years, and the State eventually made up its mind to the "evolutionary and educational" methods of exterminating religion.

The aim remained unaltered; the methods have changed. The whole educational policy, monopolized by the State, served this purpose. Every schoolmaster's duty, whatever his field, was to emphasize the anti-religious elements in his program. The most scholarly works of history or literature, even those written by the surviving professors of the ancient regime, were disfigured by polemics against the Church or Christianity. The non-existence of Christ

¹We cannot guarantee the exactness of this figure.

became a State dogma, and it is prohibited even to print His name with a capital letter.

The Church, in all denominations or religions, is limited in its activity to the work of cult in the strictest sense of the word. No religious propaganda is allowed; no apologetics, no religious literature, no reprinting of the Bible or prayer books, no religious education of children, no social activity of the faithful, not even collections for mutual aid. Only the worship service is free, according to law and official regulations. Even that is limited, since all but a few of the churches and chapels are closed. There are big towns and country districts where not one house of worship remained. In Moscow, out of more than 500 churches only some 20 were still open.

Church attendance was not a harmless and secure occupation. It could bring all kinds of disgrace upon the zealous: the ruin of a career, the loss of a job. For "activists," particularly for priests, deportation was only a question of time. The more influence the priest had upon the population, the sooner he had to go.

Effects of Anti-Religious Policy

What was the success of this grandiose experiment? For in some ways it was a success. Religion in Russia was not only persecuted by the State, but suffered great losses in the minds and hearts of the people. If you take a typical Soviet Russian, a young patriot, a man educated by Revolution and devoted to it, he is a conscious atheist. The Russian people as a whole are undergoing the same process of rationalistic enlightenment which the Western world passed through in the eighteenth century and the Russian intelligentsia in the nineteenth.

A primitive man, yesterday illiterate and living in a world of dreams and legends, receives a terrible shock on the day he learns, or rather believes, for the first time that lightning and thunder are produced by electricity and not by the prophet Elias, as the Russian people had previously believed. And when he discovers that the world was not made in six days and that man descends "from the ape," the old God dies in him. He has to choose between religion and science, between God, helpless and defeated by Revolution, and science, powerful and promising all miracles, even immortality. His choice is made—from childhood. The science which Communism brings to the masses is by no means the modern science which reveals mysteries at every step. It is the shallow and complacent nineteenth-century science with its old-fashioned materialism, Darwinism, and the Marxism of the Forties. On the other hand, this process of mass rationalization proves that the old religion was badly equipped, was lacking in scientific apologetics, and not up to date in its rational presentation. The masses of the Russian people only

repeat on a larger scale what was going on in the intelligentsia of the 1860's.

How far this process extended, assisted by the State sword, we can only conjecture. On the surface the victory is complete. Religion is so entirely swept out of Soviet life that many foreign observers do not notice it at all. And yet the Communists themselves are far from being satisfied with the results. Some years ago the head of "The Godless Union," Yaroslavsky, complained that the majority of the people still cherished religious superstitions. Certainly it is a slight majority, and it is unevenly distributed throughout the country. It has been hypothetically calculated that a little more than half of the countryside and a third of the town population still share, in some degree, religious conviction. In what degree it is difficult to say. Here a great distinction has to be made between religious survivals and revivals.

Religious Survivals and Revivals

Survivals mean, in the first place, the preservation of some Church rites. The Russian people loved their Church; it grew closely together with all their life and it is painful to part with it even when the old faith is vanishing. In most houses the icons are preserved in spite of the mockeries and protests of the younger generation. Many families who have lost their ties with the Church are eager to bury the deceased with Church prayers, to wed their girls in the Church, and even to have their infants baptized. What grain of faith is implied in these sacramental rites God alone knows. Some people preserve their total orthodoxy, some are uncertain and oscillating. One does not know whether God exists, but takes his precautions after Pascal's wisdom. The other believes in God but doesn't pray to Him. The third one prays secretly, but does not go to Church.

The Communists are inclined to consider all religion as a survival. If that were true the future for it would be hopeless in Russia. Yet we cannot doubt that a religious revival is a fact, although not a spectacular fact. To observe it one must be initiated into the life of small circles which are forced to hide themselves from strangers, or go into prisons where confession is free. From time to time we receive letters from Russia and see refugees who have escaped by some miracle and we know that Russia is not poor in martyrs and confessors of Christian faith. In the underground an intense, even fiery religious enthusiasm is burning. A mystical life, sacrificial love, and even intense thought are the indications of this revival. In the center of these circles stand people of the highest strata of the intelligentsia; the purest, the strongest, those who were not allured by high salaries and who repudiated a professional career in a radically corrupt society for a life full of suffering.

There are philosophers, poets, scientists, and artists among the new priests and new Church intelligentsia. The Church in Russia possesses now what it never possessed in the last two centuries of Russian enlightenment: the brains of the nation.

Under these conditions there is no reason to despair for the future of Russian Christianity. The Church in Russia is strong, not in numbers, but in the spiritual forces of the minority. And with them it goes along the way of purification, of redemption from old sins—political, moral, and intellectual. Despite the uncertainty of the present I do not doubt that religion will win its freedom in Russia. The Marxian ideology has been disintegrating for a long time; it has lost its former dynamic appeal and is being replaced already, in an ugly mixture, by a new nationalistic creed. To continue religious persecution and to divide the newborn national consciousness would be a suicidal policy for the State. When this freedom will come, and under what political conditions, we do not know. But it will come.

Yet with the freedom of religion and with the presence of spiritual forces in the Church all the problems of Russia's religious future are not yet solved. They are only posed.

Potential Danger for Russian Church

At the very outset a great danger lurks for the Russian Church; it is the danger of a new Establishment. Indeed, it is difficult to imagine a free Church in a totalitarian state. Russia remains more totalitarian than ever, even after its Marxian ideology has been replaced by nationalism. Russia is now a National-Socialist state with national elements continually growing, but with no elements of freedom entering into society. Even Hitler cannot tolerate the existence of independent churches in the Reich. Stalin's totalitarianism is much more complete. In the moment he decides that the Church can be a good support to the national Communist state he can include it in the system of state institutions, and its creed in the political catechism of citizens. It seems to be more likely than the existence of an independent body in the State. Napoleon created the established Catholic Church in France despite his own free-thinking. But the Catholic Church had its center in Rome and could not be nationalized entirely. Stalin has another pattern which is closer to Russia and to the Russian Church: that of Constantine the Great. He has shown himself free enough from all personal convictions to follow this pattern. At any rate from Marx to Prince St. Alexander Nevsky (his favorite hero of today) the distance is less than from Alexander the Prince to Alexander the Saint. As for the Church itself the best elements in it, certainly, would protest. They

welcomed the end of the secular bondage of the Russian Church, even brought forth by the Revolution. Yet the rank and file, the lukewarm, the "survivalists" would be content. Metropolitan Sergius can be considered as the exponent of the survivalists. Hence the danger of cooperation between these two men, Stalin and Sergius, which would mean the possibility of the establishment of the new political Byzantinism in Russia.

Let us hope that this danger will be avoided and that the freedom of the Church will not be won under the present political conditions. The future is dark. The war has so many surprises in store. Let us imagine that in some more or less remote future religion in Russia (and not only the Church) will be really, even if relatively, free. Can we imagine how under these conditions religious forces would work? What would be their tasks and their ways to reach the people?

Religious Attitudes in Russia

It is important in answering this question to know the underlying kind, or kinds, of spirituality in the Russian religious "underground." Some types of religious attitudes are more precisely outlined upon the generally dark background. I distinguish the following three without claiming, of course, to exhaust the whole complexity of life.

The first group could be called ascetic-mystical. It is also the group of martyrs and confessors par excellence. There are among them young men who recently pronounced monastic vows, and are indeed secret monks living within the world and carrying on in addition some kind of secular profession or work. All are connected with some parish priest of the same spirit and with some spiritual leader in exile. Spiritually they live only on prayer. There are two sources for their inspiration: the liturgy of the Church and the "Philocalia," a collection of the writings of ascetic Greek Fathers. In the exclusive use of these two sources of spirituality this movement is a revival of Byzantinism, perhaps unparalleled in Russia's religious past. The new mystics live in complete detachment from the world, especially from the political world, and they are very often eschatological in their world outlook. The newly converted intelligentsia are the core of these groups.

On the lower social level they find their parallel in some eschatological peasant sects of which much was heard in the first years of the Revolution. Perhaps it is no accident that we do not hear of them now. The people's eschatology was the expression of the despair of the peasant who was disoriented by the Revolution. After the extermination of millions, the rest of the peasants joined the new Kolkhose system.

The peasant became a realist. Now he understands his situation and the structure of the new State and society. He may be discontented but he doesn't seek to escape from reality.

Thus the mystical group may powerfully influence the future of Russian thought in theology and philosophy, and even of Russian art, but it can hardly find the way to the people and become the main factor of the Christian mission.

The opposite figure to the mystic is *the social priest*. He is a rather novel figure in Russian life. Some young pastors among the country clergy try to find the way to the new Soviet man. Instead of detachment here we find activity in the social life. The priest insists upon being a loyal citizen and wishes to be helpful in the construction of a new economic society. He can be a good agriculturalist, technician, or physician in addition to his ecclesiastical profession. Due to the lack of technically qualified workers he can win popularity even among local Communists. For him there is no opportunity for public religious propaganda, but he can find private friends and disciples. This is an excellent missionary method, yet there are some inherent defects in it. There is a danger of moral opportunism implied in this attitude; the social conformism, the refusal to denounce, and even the willingness to excuse every injustice which is built into the cruel every-day life in Russia. There is also the danger of spiritual shallowness as a result of the dissociation between the two halves of life: the cult within the chapel and the social work outside.

Both the social and the mystic currents exist within the orthodox Church in different bodies and schisms, which split the Russian Church of today. Along with these orthodox bodies live the old believers, ancient sectarians, who are now hardly to be distinguished, except for some rites, from the main body of the Russian Church. But outside the Church a mighty sectarian movement is being developed of a foreign, namely German Protestant, origin: it is *The Baptist movement*, or the Evangelical Christians as they call themselves in Russia. Started before the Revolution this movement achieved an amazing growth in recent times. The number of the Baptists in Russia amounts to 5,000,000 members according to the official statistics. For a newborn sectarian movement this figure signifies the religious activists only: there are no traditional or "survival" Baptists in Russia. What does this development mean for Russia's religious future?

Russian Baptists, I imagine, are very unlike their American coreligionists. They are very narrow, intolerant, Biblical literalists. Most of the average Russians find them an unpleasant kind of people. But they achieve great things: first of all, a real conversion of life, a serious consciousness of Chris-

tian call, and a zeal for confession in a time when confession means suffering and mortal danger. It would not be too daring to venture that the force of the new apostles is the force of the Gospel itself. They preach a simple and primitive gospel of sin and redemption, of the crucified and risen Christ—to people who have *never heard of it before*. Their followers are supposedly found mainly among the Communist youth (in Russia practically all the youth is Communist), who begin to feel a spiritual thirst. This youth we have seen in the state of joyful rationalism. But for finer and deeper natures the spell of reason is not lasting. A dissatisfaction comes with years, the eternal problems: what is death? what is the ultimate end of life? is man really simply an animal and nothing more? The contemplation of the eternal suffering of man, the irredeemable misery of life, in spite of social Revolution, makes the Communist of yesterday an eager seeker for truth and listener to the new apostles.

A sect has a certain advantage over the Church: it doesn't share the latter's responsibility for the crimes of the ancient regime. But on the other hand, it is lacking in the beauty of cult and in the ritual framework of life which is dear to the Russian soul. We do not believe, therefore, that the success of the Baptists can be accounted for by their anti-ecclesiastical attitude. Neither do we believe that Protestantism will conquer the Russia of tomorrow. The Baptists are followed because they have found the key to the religious need of the people. This need is the need for Christ.

The evangelical forces were always strong in the Russian Church and fused intimately with Catholic elements in it. At present, for several reasons, they are not yet actualized. I can only hint at some of the reasons that led to this tragic state. The first was the predominance, from the beginning of this century, of the "symbolism" movement, both æsthetic and mystical, which prepared, in the highly intellectual circles, the Orthodox renaissance. The other was the cruel split between the intelligentsia and the people, produced by the Revolution. The mystics simply did not want to go to masses and found more satisfaction in the "Philocalia" than in the Gospel. But the future of Russia belongs to those who will show to it the now entombed but ever-rising Christ.

Author in This Issue

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The World Church: News and Notes

Religious attitude of the German Soldier

The International Christian Press and Information Service reports the religious attitude of the German soldier from an article based on authentic reports of Protestant military chaplains.

At the beginning, the following statements are made regarding the attitude of the fighting S. S. to religion and the Church: "The S. S. men hold fast, even at war, at the front, when wounded and dying, to their own Germanic-mythological, unchurchly attitude. There is no priest or pastor in the ranks of the S. S. There is only the single faith in the Reich and its Führer. As an association, the S. S. is always kept together and unmixed with other troops, but in actual military operations it acts not independently, but in the framework of the divisions and army corps to which it is assigned. So it happens that S. S. wounded in field hospitals see a chaplain and often ask for a visit. Seldom will an S. S. man ask for religious consolation, traditional prayer, or the Bible; the pastor will not thrust all this upon him, but be very careful and simply try to bring human sympathy to the wounded or dying man. Good things result from this too. The heavy fighting in Russia, the unspeakable fatigue, naturally have psychological effects on the S. S. men as well as on other soldiers; but it is noteworthy that they do not lose the discipline and consistency of their outward and inward bearing, especially because they continually have hammered into them the principle: hold firm, don't get soft, don't give in, whether in battle or in death. This is noticeable even among the severely wounded S. S. men. They have to be in very great distress of soul, and especially they have to be very young, before they ask for the chaplain, either as counsellor or as spiritual pastor."

The article then points out that the Russian campaign has had deep influences on the religious attitude of the soldiers and therefore upon the task of the military chaplains. At the beginning, "things went so smoothly that most of the healthy and slightly wounded men, and some of the seriously wounded men, had no religious needs or only very slight ones, very superficial on the whole. . . . As the war has gone on, this has changed. But it is the Russian campaign which has led to a great opening of their souls, and led them to turn to religion and understand the power and the grace of prayer. It is this campaign which has brought the soldiers face to face with the problem of death, of the beyond, of the meaning or lack of meaning of life, according as it is or is not borne up by an absorbing ideal or faith. The stupendous scale on which things are going on, the over-strain of soul and body, the danger, the outward and inward loneliness, call forth in many soldiers the forgotten faith of their childhood, shake them up, make them restless, and make them receptive to the word of the chaplain. This word has all at once received power once again, and the only thing that matters is how the chaplain offers it; he has to be careful, respect natural reserve, keep from violently destroying the seed of a new faith. For it is not more

than a seed among those who are still healthy or only slightly wounded (unless they are religious by nature); and it is often necessary for the chaplain to begin by being more of a comrade than a pastor, and only gradually coming to identify the Church with the general sense of God which is arising. . . .

"It is striking how different the position of the chaplains among the troops now is, in comparison with the period of 1939-40, how much and how continually the respect for them is growing, and how often they are sought out even by men in good health. The men who are experiencing so many terrible things are turning to what is beyond the senses, because it gives food for the soul, and gives something firm to hold on to, inner confidence, and new strength. It is not to be wondered at that the commanders have also recognized the extraordinary value of the pastoral care of the soldiers. Out of the many thousands of Protestant and Catholic clergymen, who have for years been serving as privates, N. C. O.'s and officers, more and more are being released from other service and given rank as military chaplains."

Nazi Difficulties in Norway

The Nazis have had to rescind the order requiring Bishop Berggrav, the primate of the Norwegian Church, to report daily at Gestapo headquarters. The general public of Oslo made these visits an occasion for daily demonstrations for the Bishop. He is now required to report at a police station in a remote district.

In a speech delivered at Skien on March 9th Minister-President Quisling informed the Norwegian people that "the Bishops' offices have been taken over by other ministers who show more understanding of Christianity and of the Norwegian people's needs."

Aside from this, little information has come out of Norway during the past week regarding the struggle between Church and the Nazi State, which on February 24th reached its climax in the joint protest resignations of all Bishops.

Late information on the conflict between the teachers of Norway and the State is also lacking. More than 90 per cent of Norway's 10,500 teachers are known to have refused to join the new Nazi-conceived organization which would bind its members to bring all classroom instruction "into harmony with the New Order." The teachers took this stand despite threats that doing so would cost them their positions, and their rights to pensions.

Famous Theologian Reveals Misgivings

Dr. Martin Dibelius, foremost New Testament scholar in Germany, has published a booklet entitled, "Why Theology," in which he expresses his apprehensions about the future of Christianity in Germany as follows.

"It is a critical question whether theology, as a science concerned with the investigation and understanding of Christianity—and so indirectly also with Christian preaching—still has a place in the scientific organization of a national university.

Christianity and Crisis

A Bi-Weekly Journal of Christian Opinion

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"According to the evangelical conception, Christianity remains genuine so long as it recognizes as authoritative the message of the Gospel attested in the New Testament. Whether such a Christianity will continue to maintain itself in the Great German Reich is the question upon which the position of theology finally depends. Such a Christianity will not completely collapse in Germany—this is guaranteed by its maintenance in face of distress and death, especially in war time. Theology, too, will thus not disappear. But the question is whether this Christianity will be forced into a corner, far away perhaps from all public life. Even there, theological education need not die; but it could not continue to have a scientific existence in the sense described here. Its relations to the life of the nation and the State would then atrophy; for when theology can no longer function as a living part of the scientific cosmos, it is no longer completely able to fulfil the task of bringing its students through its teaching into the sphere of influence of German thought and work. Theology can be successful in its task of education in the sense of the new university only if it continues to have a rightful position in this university."

Bible Society Closed

The Paris depot of the British and Foreign Bible Society has just been closed by order of the occupying authorities. It was set up in 1820. Even before then the Society had allocated certain sums to Frenchmen for the purchase of Bibles. In 1837, 44 colporteurs were appointed; in one year they sold more than 100,000 sacred texts. After the last war, the work of the depot was somewhat reduced. Before the present war, it had only 6 colporteurs. At the time when it was closed down, it had 4 colporteurs still at work, and had pensioned off

9 old colporteurs. It also had office employees. All of them have been dismissed, and the authorities have released the depot from its obligations towards the retired colporteurs.

For a Closer Union of the Christian Churches

We take the following extracts from *The Chinese Recorder* of October, 1941:

"In the last four years of war in China, there may not have been many specific moves towards organic unity between the different Christian Churches, but there has been much cooperation amongst various denominations. The environmental circumstances caused by the hostilities and the necessity of combining in such a project as relief work, have brought closer together the men and women of different communions."

This desire for reunion has been expressed by such declarations as the following, which was drawn up at a recent conference of missionaries at Peitaiho, representing the following Churches: Anglican, Baptist, Congregational, Lutheran, Methodist, Presbyterian, Church of the Brethren, United Church of Canada:

"Believing—(1) that the outward form of the visible Church should and must conform to the realities of its inward life;

(2) "that a fundamental reality is that the Spirit of God in the Christian society does not obliterate differences of race, culture and individual temperament: yet, through bringing each member of that society into an intimate and transforming fellowship with God, making all share in one common life and spirit—that revealed in Jesus Christ—it transcends these differences and unites those who share the life of God in a harmonious fellowship one with another;

(3) "that the present form of the Christian Church, consisting as it does of a number of independent and separate bodies, is a direct denial in outward form of this inner life of unity and harmony, hinders the growth of Christian character within the Church, lessens the power of the Church's witness in a discordant world on behalf of individual and international reconciliation, and retards the effectiveness of the Church and the coming of the Kingdom of God;

(4) "that the ecumenical conferences of the past four decades (in particular Oxford, Edinburgh, Madras and Amsterdam), with the exploratory work of the leaders of the reunion movement in South India, have already marked out broad principles and practices within which reunion can take place;

"Therefore,—We, a group of Christians of varying ecclesiastical affiliations, engaged in the service of the Church in China, meeting informally at Peitaiho, declare:

(1) "that we accept as the ideal form of the visible Church one that expresses outwardly the reality of its unity of life and spirit, as opposed to its present condition of division; and

(2) "that we pledge our service to the realization of one united Church in China."

I. C. P. I. S., Geneva.

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